



QUESTION 3

Do more Kentuckians have certificates and degrees?

Kentucky must double the number of college-educated adults in Kentucky by 2020 to reach the national average. To do this, the postsecondary system must recruit and enroll more students, ensure more students persist to certificate and degree completion, and keep graduates living and working in the state. Reaching our goals will require an infusion of high school graduates and working-age adults into the postsecondary pipeline at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including two- to four-year transfer students. If we succeed, everyone in the state, even those people who never set foot on a college campus, will benefit: more certificates and degrees mean more nurses, teachers, social workers, and public safety officers, not to mention cutting-edge medical research, technological innovations, and cleaner water and air. The state's future in large part depends upon Kentuckians' ability to advance seamlessly through the educational system and obtain credentials that will enrich their lives and life in the Commonwealth.

"Kentucky's reality is that we will sink or swim not on how well we educate our youth, but on how well we educate our entire population, whether age 15, 35, 55, or 75. For the most part, our workforce of tomorrow is just our workforce of today grown older.

As the baby boomers mature, Kentucky will become an aging state. Many people may find if they retire too early that they will run out of income before they run out of life. Kentucky must develop policies for retraining and retooling people. We must invest in educating not just our youth but each and every one of us. We must educate and re-educate, train and retrain."

*Ron Crouch, Director
Kentucky State Data Center*

Since 1998, total enrollment in postsecondary education has increased 25 percent.

The number of GED graduates transitioning to college increased from 12 percent in 1998 to 19 percent in 2002.

For the first time, a Kentucky ninth grader's chance for college exceeds the national average, up from 34 to 38 percent over the last decade.

In the past decade, the college participation rate of minority young adults (ages 18-24) rose from 15 to 32 percent.

At the state's public universities, the systemwide six-year graduation rate rose from 36.7 percent in 1998 to 44.3 percent in 2004.

Kentucky resident African American undergraduate enrollment increased from 7.3 percent in 1995 to 8 percent in 2003.

PROGRESSES

CHALLENGES

For every 100 ninth graders,
only 15 complete a college degree.

Minority and low-income students are much less
likely to go to college than white, affluent students.

The proportion of degree-seeking freshmen
returning their second year is low and virtually
unchanged over the last six years.

The number of students transferring from
two-year to four-year institutions was lower
in 2004 than in 1998.

Kentucky's graduation rate of 44 percent remains
well below the national rate of 54 percent.

In 2004, Kentucky ranked 47th in the nation
in the percent of the adult population with a
four-year degree or higher.

How We Get to Yes

- Expanded outreach efforts at the state and grassroots level that focus on underserved regions and populations to increase the number of Kentuckians who value and pursue postsecondary education.
- Accelerated efforts to help more GED graduates transition to postsecondary education.
- Expanded capacity at public and independent institutions to serve more students more effectively through course redesign, alternative methods of program delivery, and better coordination of distance education.
- Concentrated efforts across the postsecondary system to strengthen the guidance and support provided to on-campus and distance education students.
- Expanded capability of our community and technical college system to deliver a general education component, incentives and encouragement for students to transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution, and reduced time to degree.
- Increased efforts to address workforce shortages in targeted regions and in degree areas (undergraduate and graduate) that support economic development.
- Incentives and rewards linked to increased degree production.

